

MUSIC

NEWSLETTER



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A New Music Curriculum at Harvard

The goal of our new curriculum, which takes effect this fall, is to build flexibility, making it possible for students with diverse backgrounds and interests to flourish in the music concentration. We created multiple entryways into the concentration that allow students from different backgrounds and with diverse musical interests to join. And we aimed to shape a curriculum that makes it possible for our faculty to be creative and teach to their intellectual strengths.

Why and how these changes have come to be was recently examined in a piece written by William Robin, “What Controversial Changes at Harvard Mean for the Music Curriculum,” published in *The Log Journal* (www.thelogjournal.com), an initiative of National Sawdust [interview edited slightly for length].

WILLIAM ROBIN: What is the history of these curricular changes?

ALEXANDER REHDING: The two pillars of the old curriculum were a history sequence and a theory sequence, which took up a fair amount of the required courses, leaving very little courses for electives where the students could follow their specific interests. That curriculum worked really well for some students and not so well for other students, and that was one of the points we’re trying to address. We wanted to create more flexibility to allow for a wider range of interests.

Why are these changes taking place now, and how did they emerge?

SUZANNAH CLARK: It’s a response to two things: one is the intellectual and academic climate of the study of music generally, but also the directions that our department has taken. This is a reflection of our faculty, and a reflection of our current students.

REHDING: The other goal is to increase diversity. We know that there are many students at Harvard who don’t have a traditional musical background but who are very musical, and it’s those people that felt the music curriculum wasn’t for them. And that was something that we wanted to address.



photos: Jake Belcher

We decided to give students the freedom to choose various paths through the curriculum. And so rather than giving them predetermined structure with a history sequence and a theory sequence, we put in place a very robust advising scheme. If you have more flexibility for the individual student, it’s important to balance that freedom with really good advising to make sure the students know what the options are and that they’re choosing combinations that work for them. Each student now has to put together a study plan where they outline how they are going to pave a path through the concentration and why they’re taking the courses they’re planning to do.

You’ve replaced the traditional music history sequence with two courses, “Thinking About Music” and “Critical Listening.” What happens if students never learn about Schubert? Or if they never learn about Beethoven? How do you account for that?

ANNE SHREFFLER: I had an excellent but conventional musical education at the undergraduate and at the graduate levels, and I never learned anything about Ornette Coleman or Miles Davis or Thelonious Monk, not to mention popular music. We’ve always had gaps in our education, and I think it’s a little disingenuous to say, “Well, what about Schubert?” What about Tony Conrad? I teach the survey now, and I have never pretended to “cover” things. You don’t cover things when you do a survey,

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and I tell the students that: we're going to talk about things that interest me—that's one thing we're going to do—and the other thing we're going to do is learn some music that you might find interesting or appealing—or not. But coverage cannot be the goal, and was never the goal. CLARK: I think that pedagogy is teaching people about how it is they've learned about something, so that they can go on and teach themselves whatever else they want to learn. Sometimes even when I give out a reading list, I include a section called "For later in life." What we want to do is train people to think about music that they can carry with them. We don't know what music is coming next, so we want them to be able to engage with that too.

Do these changes make the concentration more accessible for someone who wanted to pursue music at Harvard from a non-Western classical standpoint? Will it be possible to be a Harvard music major who is a singer-songwriter or a hip-hop beat maker?

SHREFFLER: Absolutely, yes. A lot of the social media discussion unfortunately devolved around the concept of standards, which is a very amorphous and ideology-laden concept. I like to think of it in terms of access. In the past, we have essentially relied on an enormous amount—up to 10 years worth—of pre-education before they came to Harvard. We relied on students showing up having had piano lessons since the age of six, perhaps visiting one of the excellent precollege divisions in big cities around the country, and perhaps having theory courses there in addition to their instrumental training, orchestra training, chamber music training. And, in fact, Harvard has many such students. And they are welcome in our department, and they come and take our courses, and they can play in our orchestras, etc.

But there are many other students who did not have that kind of childhood. And our old curriculum was saying to those students, "You cannot major in music because your parents did not give you 12 years of this kind of education that we implicitly require." We've gotten rid of this whole notion of this implicit—and it is, ultimately, a class-based implicit—requirement. And students come with a variety of backgrounds and musical interests. For example, a highly skilled singer-songwriter can become a music concentrator.

It's not about eliminating the idea that

you need notation, that's nonsense. It's the idea that you can come in with varying degrees of knowledge of technical aspects of music and improve those aspects, according to what your artistic aspirations are.

What has the response to these changes been like among students?

SHREFFLER: As soon as I mentioned it—particularly the notion that they would have this new flexibility—many students said to me, "Oh, I can become a concentrator now. Now I can do it; now I see a place for myself." We're not doing it to get more concentrators, because we already had a lot. We're under no pressure at all to expand that by the administration, and we're already happy with our number of concentrators, and we're very, very happy with the enrollment in our courses. But the idea that students can feel welcome who previously did not really see a home for themselves in our curriculum: that's very positive.

Why do you think the external response has been so heated, and why has the elimination of the theory requirement been a point of controversy?

CLARK: If there was no response, that would be the alarming thing. Music theory has been around a very long time, and it actually isn't going away. The focus shouldn't be on, "Oh my goodness, what's happened to theory?" but "How has theory gained all of these other new contexts?" Theory is not something where you take the course and you're finished, and you tick that off and then you have a rigorous education. Theory is but one component that enables you to then think about all these other areas.

When you learn principles of music theory, it both inflects and opens up ways you can hear, the ways you can think, the ways you can understand history, the ways you can understand world musics. I think music theory will be showcased in a very different way: by asking people to think about what it means.



What do you say to someone like John Adams, who expressed concern on Twitter about the changes, writing that "Music study is both cultural study AND a highly disciplined, hands-on technical craft: ear-training, harmony, counterpoint"?

SHREFFLER: John Adams is one of our leading composers. If we have a young version of John Adams, and he or she comes up to us and says "I want to be a composer," then we say, "You go take Music 51. And then after that you take Music 150, and after that you take Counterpoint." You want to be a composer? You do these things. Not all of our concentrators want to be composers; people have their various ways one can work in the world.

As theorists and musicologists, how do you see these changes fitting into the broader direction of our scholarly disciplines?

CLARK: The field has done a lot of work in opening up how music opens up the mind, the ears, and the senses in really wonderful ways, and in some ways the curriculum is a reflection of that. We're not just going to ask, "Well, what is your reading of this music, or your hearing of it?" but also, "Your performance, your composing of it": there are a multitude of ways of coming at music.

William Robin is a musicologist and assistant professor at the University of Maryland, writes regularly for The New York Times and The New Yorker, and maintains a lively presence on Twitter (@seatedovation). He lives in Washington, D.C.

Braxton Shelley Appointed to Faculty



Photo: University of Chicago

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We recently completed a search for a tenure-track musicologist, and could not be more thrilled with the result. He is an emerging scholar of outstanding promise, with a great potential to contribute to our community and to the field. Rising to the top of a highly competitive pool of candidates, he represents the bright future of musicology, and we look forward to working with him for years to come. Welcome to Harvard, Braxton Shelley!

—Suzannah Clark

BRAXTON SHELLEY joins the Harvard University Department of Music in July, 2017. Shelley is completing his PhD in the History and Theory of Music at the University of Chicago; he is also finishing a Master of Divinity in the University of Chicago's Divinity School. He earned a BA in Music and History from Duke University. His dissertation, "Sermons in Song: Richard Smallwood, the Vamp, and the Gospel Imagination," develops an analytical paradigm for gospel music that braids together resources from cognitive theory, ritual theory, and homiletics with studies of repetition, form, rhythm and meter.

Recipient of the 2016 Paul A. Pisk Prize from the American Musicological Society, Braxton's work has also won a Cathy Heifetz Memorial Award from the University of Chicago Department of Music and the 2016 Graduate Student Prize from the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music. His most recent articles, "Tuning Up': Towards a Gospel Aesthetic," in *Exploring Christian Song*, and "This Must Be The Single': Valuing The Live Recording in Contemporary Gospel Performance," in *Living the Life I Sing*, are forthcoming in 2017. He has presented his research at Northwestern University's Music Theory and Cognition Workshop, Harvard University's Graduate Music Forum, Music Theory Midwest and the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music.

Paul and Catherine Buitendijk University Professor CAROLYN ABBATE published "Sound Object Lessons" in the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* (December 2017);

"Overlooking the Ephemeral," in *New Literary History* (Winter 2017); and *Voix hors-chant* (Paris: Editions Van Dieren, 2017), a translation of *Unsung Voices* by David Fiala. She also gave the keynote for the "Ear Pieces" conference at Cambridge University and the Allanbrook Memorial Lecture at UC Berkeley, among others.

Senior Lecturer ANDREW CLARK's "Music and Disability" course created ACT ONE for Arts First this year, where people of all abilities

and backgrounds were invited to participate in a series of inclusive performing arts workshops. These universally designed, wheelchair-accessible and sensory-friendly music and dance activities welcomed everyone to join in on the fun of making art together.

Professor SUZANNAH CLARK concluded her two-year term as President of the New England Conference of Music Theorists; in her capacity as President, she organized the annual NECMT conference, which was held at UMass Amherst on April 7–8, 2017. Suzannah gave three recent keynote talks on medieval and nineteenth-century topics: "Resonant Blunders in the History of Tonal Theory" at the Music

Theory Society of New York State at Hobart and William Smith Colleges; "Of Swans, Minstrels, and the Hermeneutics of Song" at the West Coast Conference of Music Theory and Analysis at the University of Victoria, BC, Canada; and in June she will give, "Music Theory and the Hermeneutics of Song" at the North American Conference on Nineteenth-Century Music at Vanderbilt University. She also delivered the Princeton Musicology Distinguished Alumnus Lecture at Princeton University. Clark has been appointed the Robin Orr Lecturer at Cambridge University, UK where she will deliver "Cupid's Arrow and the Conventions of Song in the Medieval Motet."

The *Boston Globe's* Zoe Madonna listed



Walter Bigelow Rosen Professor CHAYA CZERNOWIN's album *The Quiet* as one of her "10 best" for 2016; as did 5against4. Alex Ross (the *New Yorker*) cited it in his Notable Performances and Recordings of 2016, and WQXR radio named it one of the Top New-Music Moments of 2016. *Hidden* (performed at the ICA in Boston by Jack Quartet) was named one of ten best Memorable Musical Events by Steve Smith in *thelogjournal.com*. Czernowin also



Yo-Yo Ma and Cristina Pato from the SilkRoad Ensemble during the Louis C. Elson Lecture, "Culture, Connection, and Citizenship in a Time of Change."

received the German Record Critic's Award in Contemporary Music for *The Quiet*.

Morton B. Knafel Professor THOMAS F. KELLY received an honorary doctorate from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill at May Commencement. He has been elected a Fellow of the Medieval Academy of America. He will receive the Howard Mayer Brown Award for lifetime achievement in early music from Early Music America at the Boston Early Music Festival in June. Kelly's edition of Beneventan chant, co-authored with Matthew Peattie (*The Music of the Beneventan Rite*, Bärenreiter 2016), was presented at ceremonies at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome, the Conservatorio "San Pietro alla Maiella" in Naples, and the Cathedral of Benevento. He taught a course on Beneventan chant at the Pontifical Ambrosian Institute of Sacred Music in Milan. Additionally, Kelly was the Wayne Wentzel lecturer at Butler University in Indianapolis, gave the keynote address at the Conference on Information Fluency at the Conference of Independent Colleges in New Orleans; gave talks at Oberlin Conservatory and in various sites in Cleveland to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Apollo's Fire, the Cleveland Baroque Orchestra. An updated and revised version of his 1989 book *The Beneventan Chant* will appear, as *Il canto beneventano*, in an Italian translation by Alessandro de Lillo published by Vox Antiqua.

William Powell Mason Professor CAROL J. OJA contributed "Bert Williams and Blackface Minstrelsy," to a new exhibit, with podcast, at Houghton to commemorate the library's 75th anniversary. She was a Visiting Fellow through the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and gave lectures at Kobe University and Tokyo University of the Arts, as well as for the Eastern and Western Divisions of the Japanese Musicological Society and the Alban Berg Gesellschaft in Tokyo. Her "Music Under the Stars: the New York Philharmonic's Stadium Concerts," will appear in Playbill (Lincoln Center) in June. Oja Chaired the Pulitzer Prize Committee in Music.

Fanny Peabody Professor ALEXANDER REHDING published a colloquy in JAMS (including a contribution from PETER McMURRAY PHD NOVEMBER 2014). He gave colloquia at Columbia and the Class of 1960 lecture at Williams College, and conference talks at Cambridge and the Salzburg Easter

Festival. Rehding also took his spring 2017 graduate seminar "Ancient Music Theory and its Afterlives" on a research trip to Italy.

G. Gordon Watts Professor KAY SHELEMAY gave a number of presentations during spring 2017, including speaking as part of a session on biography she organized at the conference of the International Musicological Society in Tokyo in March; delivering the Gallatin Distinguished Lecture at New York University in April; and presenting a lecture on "reciprocal diasporas" between Italy and Ethiopia at a May conference on "Music in the Mediterranean Diaspora" at Villa I Tatti in Florence. Shelemay also participated in a Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Seminar "Modeling Humanities in Higher Education" and in a Radcliffe Workshop on "Interrogating the Nation/Repositioning U.S. Music in the 21st Century." During the 2015-2016 academic year, Kay Shelemay co-chaired Harvard College's Social Organizations Policy Implementation Committee.

On February 15, Senior Lecturer YOSVANY TERRY's Bohemian Trio (saxophonist/composer Terry, pianist Orlando Alonso, cellist Yves Dharamraj) performed at Brooklyn's National Sawdust to celebrate the release of their debut album, *Okónkolo*.

Fanny P. Mason Professor HANS TUTSCH-

KU premiered *codification-memory* for Soprano and the Talea ensemble as part of the Fromm Players at Harvard. This summer he will teach a Spatial Audio Summer Workshop at EMPAC as well as at the International Matrix Academy, this year in Ljubljana, and at the EBMF International summer academy for young composers. He will be the featured composer at the international festival for electroacoustic music in Buenos Aires. Tutschku is composing a sound and light installation for the James Turrell Skyspace at Rice University, Houston.

In conjunction with Dwight P. Robinson, Jr. Professor KATE VAN ORDEN's seminar on "Voices and Books," the department helped host the residency of Roger Chartier, director of studies at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, as well as Jordi Savall, Catalan musician and UNESCO Artist for Peace, who discussed his cross-cultural musical collaborations in an evening roundtable moderated by van Orden. van Orden also organized the conference "Music in the Mediterranean Diaspora" that took place at the Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, in Florence in May, at which KAY SHELEMAY spoke. It was the first music conference held at I Tatti and brought together over a dozen scholars from the United States, France, Italy, England, Turkey, and Australia.



The students of Kay Shelemay's "Performing Musical Difference" led off the university-wide ARTS FIRST festival on Saturday morning, April 29, with a performance of body percussion designed by Silk Road Blodgett Guest Artist Shane Shanahan as well as other cross-cultural repertory. MUS 194, titled "Performing Musical Difference," was a course organized in collaboration with the Silk Road Ensemble.

Black lives matter.

Black Lives Matter: Music, Race, and Justice
Harvard Graduate Music Forum Conference
February 3–4, 2017

Matthew D. Morrison, Ph.D.
Keynote Lecturer

Imani Uzuri
Keynote/Performer

projects.iq.harvard.edu/gmf2017



BLACK LIVES MATTER: 2017 Graduate Music Forum Conference Brings Scholars, Community Together

The most memorable aspect of the Harvard Graduate Music Forum's Black Lives Matter Academic Conference in February was that half the attendees were not academics.

Black Lives Matter: Music, Race, and Justice (BLM), held Friday and Saturday, February 3 and 4 on the Harvard campus, was planned and produced by graduate students from the music department and co-chaired by Laurie Lee and Ian Copeland. A call for papers netted nearly 50 proposals, and the graduate student committee worked to shape a conference where presentations would have ethnic, gender, and institutional diversity. Panels and presentations included those on biased policing, public protests led by African American preachers, the power of anger and messiness in Black music aesthetics, and self-care in the face of oppression. Almost 400 people filled Paine Hall for the

classical music. The keynote by Matthew D. Morrison, for example, raised this point very directly: how can we hear echoes of bias and discrimination in the music we study as well as that which we listen to everyday?"

The essential question asked by conference planners was summarized in the call for papers: "How can music studies redress historical biases, racial discrimination, and cultural elitism within its own ranks, and in so doing inculcate solidarity with those fighting for Black lives?" What can be done?

"The Black Lives Matter movement and its priorities resonate with young faculty of color in particular," Copeland says. "They speak and act from personal experience; for them, discrimination is not a mere buzzword. One huge priority has to be increasing exposure for scholars of color."

"People conflate diversity of faculty with diversity of the canon," says Copeland. "We're not talking simply ethnic diversity. White scholars can work on hip-hop and jazz. Black scholars can write about Mozart."

Lee is encouraged that the BLM conference evoked a more nuanced view of race and agency. "What I realize is that we're not done. There was a lot of discomfort and criticism about our producing this conference, and it didn't die down afterwards. And a lot of support and excitement, too; students want to talk about it. There is value in continuing to talk, to set a narrative about what happened and what mattered and what could happen next."

Friday afternoon roundtable discussion.

"I think one of the most impressive aspects was that parents brought their children," says Lee. "Half of Paine Hall was filled with professional music scholars, the other half with journalism students, activists, musicians, and local Cambridge residents interested in the Black Lives Matter movement. The audience was as big a part of the vibe as the presenters. It was inspiring to see conversation take place between academics and non-academics."

"Everyone asked really good questions," adds Copeland. "It challenged the speakers to make their answers relevant to a wider audience."

From its inception, the event provoked skepticism about producing an academic conference about a real issue where lives are at stake. "This was addressed multiple times in Q and A, and we were happy it came up," says Lee. "It was the central question. Part of the historical bias in music studies is that music scholars don't collaborate with non-academics, even about issues that should have collaboration."

Imani Uzuri's performance on Friday evening was a case in point. Her keynote/performance, "Come By Here My Lord," invoked a hush arbor—a space where slaves gathered secretly in antebellum America to come together and pray—in a dimly lit, intimate environment in Holden Chapel. Members of the Kuumba Singers joined Uzuri to sing spirituals in what Lee describes as a transportive experience. Like other aspects of the BLM conference, it was not what you'd have expected.

BLM activists and supporters came to the conference to hear what scholars were writing about the movement—several of the papers put BLM into historical perspective—and academics came to understand the experiences of those directly involved in the struggle. The discussions, questions, and comments all rung out beneath the surnames of European composers carved onto the frieze that circles Paine Hall.

"[The frieze] was mentioned many times," Copeland says. "It raises the question: whose music belongs in the academy? This is the same conversation we have when we talk about creating a new undergraduate curriculum. The truth is that Harvard to some extent gets to decide which music will receive academic scrutiny; this is the structural bias inherent in a historically powerful institution. And it's not often that you're debating this while you're staring at the canon, with its visible omission of people of color, women, and composers that challenge the boundary drawn around



Imani Uzuri. Photo: Petra Richterova

Graduate Student News

The workshop "(Trans)National Musical Modernities," took place Thursday and Friday March 2 and 3 at the Cervantes Observatory at Harvard, exploring different facets of cosmopolitanism, modernity, globality, locality, identity formation, national imaginaries, and constructions of difference in the transnational exchanges and technology networks of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. There was a special emphasis on music, and exchanges between Latin America and the United States.

Structured as a series of panels, keynotes, and a concert over the two days, the workshop gave participants time to react to and discuss a wide-ranging array of topics. Professors Alejandro Madrid (Cornell University and 2016 Visiting Professor at Harvard and Instituto Cervantes Observatorio), BRIGID COHEN [PhD 2008] New York University), Michael Birembaum-Quintero (Boston University), Daniel Party (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile), and Chelsea Burns (Harvard University) were respondents on papers presented by Harvard graduate students Ian Copeland, Laurie Lee, John Dilworth, Julio Zúñiga, Matthew Leslie Santana, Felipe Ledesma-Núñez, and Daniel Walden, as well as Sergio Ospina (Cornell), Melody Chapin (Brown), and Sarah Town (Princeton). Papers covered areas of research such as "Race, Drag, Performance and Sexual Revolution in Contemporary Cuba"; "Decolonial Aesthetics, Lettered Revolutions"; and "Francis O'Neill and the Modern Writing of Traditional Irish Music," among many others.

Keynotes concluded each day's activities: on Thursday, Michael Birembaum Quintero presented "Disjunctive Temporalities in the Music of Colombia's Black Pacific," and on Friday, Brigid Cohen gave the paper, "Musical Cosmopolitanism and the Historiography of the Recent Past." The events concluded with a concert at the performing arts space, Lilypad, in Cambridge by Palonegro, Cornell University's Latin American music band.

The conference was supported by the Cervantes Observatory at Harvard University, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies and Harvard Music Department.



Krystal Klingenberg (E-5), composer Edgar Barroso (PhD 2014), and Payem Yousefi (E-1) at a GSAS Alumni gathering in April.

"Events like these are exactly what we need as graduate students: spaces where we offer sustained engagement with each other's work... Having everyone in the room together while also having two professors assigned to each piece worked beautifully I thought. And being together for two days fostered a sense of community that is unusual in spaces like these..."—Matthew Leslie Santana, E-3, on (Trans)National Music Modernities

SIVAN COHEN-ELIAS won First in the Darmstadt Theatre Prize for her opera that will be produced in 2018.

At the recent SAM conference the following Harvard students gave papers: MONICA HERSHBERGER, SAM PARLER and graduate ANNE SEARCY.

PEI-LING HUANG and MAREK POLIKS both received a Kennedy, Knox, Sheldon Fellowship for next year.

RUJING HUANG won the James T. Koetting Prize for outstanding graduate student paper at NECSEM. She also received a Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies travel award to pursue research on "Court Music Without a Court: Yayue Revival in Contemporary Mainland China." In 2017–18, she will be the Asia Center Graduate Student Associate (GSA) in Residence.

MATTHEW LESLIE SANTANA was awarded a Summer Research Travel Grant as well as a year-long research fellowship from the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies.

ALANA MAILES received a Villa I Tatti residency fellowship for this fall.

TIM McCORMACK and CHRIS SWITHINBANK won an international composition contest in which they were commissioned to write a new piece for Klangforum Wien to be premiered at the Impuls Festival in 2019.

BILL O'HARA published an essay in the Newsletter of the Mozart Society of America. He presented papers at International Association for the Study of Popular Music and Music Theory

Society of New York State. This fall, O'Hara will join the faculty of Gettysburg College as Assistant Professor.

DIANA ADAMEK OLIVA received a Mellon/CLIR fellowship for dissertation research on her topic, "Earthquakes in the Eighteenth-Century Musical Imagination." Oliva will conduct research in Guatemala, Peru, Portugal, and Spain.

Sam Parler accepted a one-year position at Denison University.

SARAH POLITZ accepted a position as Visiting Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology at Williams College starting in the fall.

STEFAN PRINS was composer-in-residence at the festival Pre-Amplitudes in Switzerland, with performances of his pieces by Nouvel Ensemble Contemporain and Antoine Francoise, as well as a performance of his band Ministry of Bad Decisions. Prins taught at the International Impuls Academy in Austria in February, and in March had the first full performance by Stephane Ginsburgh of the *Piano Hero Cycle* at Muziekcentrum de Bijloke, Belgium. A portrait concert of Prins's work took place in Baden, Switzerland, at the NUMU series, with solo pieces performed by Nadar Ensemble. He released 2 CDs, *Funambules* and *Cloud Chamber*.

FREDERICK REECE received an Alvin H. Johnson AMS 50 Dissertation Fellowship.

NATASHA ROULE was named a Mellon/ACLS dissertation completion fellow for "Reviving Lully: Opera and the Negotiation of Absolutism in the French Provinces, 1685-1750." She was also awarded the Irene Alm Memorial Prize for the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music for the strongest student paper at their annual conference.

CAITLIN SCHMID received a Warren Center Term-Time Fellowship.

DANNY WALDEN's performance in Chris Mercer's *Octoid* with Fonema Consort was released in video and audio formats as part of their album, *Fifth Tableau*, on the label Parlour Tapes+.



Interview: Sam Wu '17

Sam Wu, a composer from Shanghai, is a joint concentrator in Music and East Asian Studies. He has won the Robert Levin, John Green and Hugh F. MacColl Prizes, an Artist Development Fellowship from the Office for the Arts, and the Harvard Bach Society Orchestra Composition Competition, among other international awards. His work has been performed by the Melbourne Symphony, Shanghai Philharmonic, Beijing National Center for the Performing Arts, Shanghai International Arts Festival, Callithumpian Consort, Antioch Chamber Ensemble, Princeton Pianists' Ensemble, and pipa master Wu Man, among others. This fall, Sam begins a master's program in composition at Juilliard.

Is it possible to summarize what your experience as a composer at Harvard has been?

"I'm grateful on many levels for the liberal arts education I received here. I was able to study both music and East Asian Studies, both of which helped me develop reading and writing skills, and critical thinking, all of which comes back to inspire my musical work. Even in courses like history or literature or religion, those approaches to thinking about issues translate back into music. I had some inkling that this would be true when I entered four years ago, and it was why I came here, but my last four years confirmed it.

My most extreme experience of music has been in the music department, but Harvard is also vibrant with extracurricular music. I've worked with the Gilbert and Sullivan Players, the Early Music Society, and was music director of the Mozart Society Orchestra, guest conductor of the Bach Society Orchestra, and assistant conductor of the HRO. I also wrote music for the choirs. A lot of musicians here don't want to go into music but are conservatory caliber. I was attracted to the idea of having more than music in life, and I found like-minded people. I wasn't alone.

Who are your composition mentors?

I worked with Chaya [Czernowin], Josh Levine, Hans [Tutschku], Richard Beaudoin; they were instrumental in my development. They challenged me to think more broadly and deeply.

Specifically?

I became more conscious of pre-compo-



sition, the time you examine your reasons for writing and all the ways you can think about a piece coming into being before you start it. I didn't have that coming in—this way to think and talk about your music; to dive deeper, broaden strokes. I first ask myself what kind of sound world I am creating, and what are the logical threads and boundaries within which I operate. And then I start writing.

Was it possible to get your pieces performed?

If you're a pianist you can practice, but a composer is not practicing until you hear the piece live. The Harvard Composers Association is fantastic, as it produces concerts of our chamber music performed by professional musicians, for the last few years the Callithumpian Consort. Students and faculty both have broadened my listening palette over my time here, especially within new music. That was my big goal – to be open-minded.

You did quite a bit of conducting while you were here – how does that fit in?

Conducting and composing are intricately connected. In the kind of score study I do for conducting I'm asking myself why is this here, how does it inform my conducting, how could it inform my own work? There's so much to learn from every piece of music. Conducting broadens your knowledge of repertory.

*How did your thesis piece, *ephemerae*, come about?*

ephemerae was inspired by Fujian *nanyin*, ancient melodies from southeast China. It's classical chamber music that traces back to

The interconnectedness of our postmodern world is a major theme in my music. My experiences growing up make this pertinent: an Australian citizen who calls Shanghai home as he navigates American college life in Massachusetts. In an age where a night's sleep is all it takes to travel halfway around the world, and where Bach and Mongolian throat singing can occupy adjacent YouTube tabs, I explore and seek inspiration in non-Western musical traditions, even as I write and perform works within the classical lineage. I am interested in bridging apparent differences between cultures and musicians, and in doing so, seeking the subcutaneous common ground that we share as human beings.

court music. For the Department of East Asian Studies I wrote an ethnographical survey of *nanyin* today. I traveled to Fujian Province and to Taiwan to interview scholars and educators in the tradition. I used this research as background knowledge to write *ephemerae*.

When I listen to *nanyin*, I have the impression that time is slowed down, that I'm suspended in a sound world submerged in a viscous fluid. So, how can I infuse my personal musical language with traces of *nanyin* to create a musical experience that can give this sense of suspended time?

Have you been able to work closely with faculty?

Chaya was a great help. I had bi-weekly lessons with her throughout the year to work on *ephemerae*. When I took Richard Beaudoin's 160 I was working on a commission for Beijing Center for Performing Arts for a piece for didgeridoo and orchestra. Professor Beaudoin let me write this in class – I had the seminar to hear what others were doing and to do the work for the course, and private lessons with him as well.

Has your music changed over the past four years?

I think mostly I've broadened my interests. There are more avenues I can explore; I can hear more in my head. I can recognize new areas that I never knew existed before. I still have the core of what I brought with me – there's still very much the fuzzy sense of self – but now I'm seeing differently.

Alumni News

WILLIAM BARES (PhD 2010) received tenure at the University of North Carolina, Asheville.

Parma Recordings released Leonard Lehman's '71, newest CD, recorded in the US & Russia, in memory of his mother, Emily R. Lehrman, on Jan. 13, 2017, the second anniversary of her death. His newest (11th) opera, THE TRIANGLE FIRE had its New York premiere in March.

Lansing McLoskey won the American



Prize in Choral Division for his work [...] *Qumran Psalms...* (2015). Which is a setting of lost psalms fragments from the Dead Sea Scrolls. It was commissioned by the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University for ensemblerlino vocale in Berlin, who premiered it in May of 2015. The Boston Conservatory performed his concerto *What We Do Is Secret* for brass quintet and wind ensemble on May 5th.

Congratulations to PETER McMURRAY (PhD November 2014) who is currently a fellow at Harvard Society of Fellows on his acceptance of a position at the University of Cambridge. The second position in Cambridge was offered to BETTINA VARWIG (PhD 2006).

The O'Connor Band, featuring Forrest O'Connor (AB 2011) won the 2017 Grammy Award for Best Bluegrass Album.



Harvard Composer Du Yun Wins Pulitzer; Ashley Fure, finalist



"This year, for the first time in the prize's seventy-four-year history, all three finalists were women."

—Will Robin, *New Yorker*

from the pop world gratuitously.

"I did not want to write an indie-rock opera, an opera that had that voice, but the story called for that," she said.

Du Yun, a native of Shanghai but now in New York, has released a pop album of her own, but she's also been commissioned

by American orchestras such as the Detroit and Seattle Symphonies. Her works have been called cutting edge, yet she feels that the intelligence of classical music audiences should not be underestimated.

When Chinese composer DU YUN (PhD 2006) heard she won the Pulitzer Prize for music, she thought it was a prank. Yun had just returned from a day of panels at The Culture Summit in Abu Dhabi, and her librettist texted her the good news, which arrived close to midnight.

Thirty-nine-year-old Yun won the prize for "Angel's Bone," about a financially struggling couple who set out to nurse two battered angels, but instead kept the angels captive and exploited them for wealth and personal gains. The Pulitzer board called the operatic work "bold" and said it "integrates vocal and instrumental elements and a wide range of styles into a harrowing allegory for human trafficking in the modern world."

The score calls for a mezzo-soprano and a baritone in the lead roles, but also, as Du Yun noted, "A female voice who can do punk rock." [...] The idea that a non-operatic voice can have a place in opera today was attractive to Du Yun. But she wasn't out to add a voice

—reprinted from the *Washington Post*

ASHLEY FURE's *Bound to the Bow*, an orchestral piece inspired by Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" was named a Pulitzer prize finalist this year. An assistant professor at Dartmouth University, Fure (PhD 2013) was also awarded one of the 173 Guggenheim fellowships awarded to scholars, artists, and scientists in the United States and Canada for 2017.

Photo: Robert Gill, Dartmouth University website.



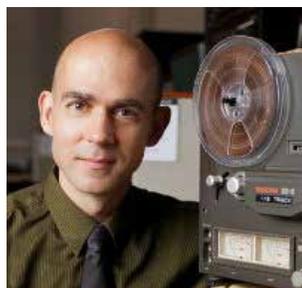
Bound to the Bow was commissioned for the 2016 New York Philharmonic Biennial. Fure's opera, *The Force of Things: An Opera in Objects*, will be performed by the International Contemporary Ensemble at Montclair State University in Montclair, N.J. in October.

Photo: Robert Gill, Dartmouth University website.

Archive of World Music Acquires Lybarger Collection

—Adam Schutzman

In 2008, the Loeb Music Library's Archive of World Music received a collection of fieldwork from ethnomusicologist Lowell Lybarger, now titled the "Lowell H. Lybarger Collection of Pakistani Music Materials." Supported by a Fulbright program, Dr. Lybarger lived and conducted ethnomusicology research in Pakistan between 1994–1996, while working on his Masters in Ethnomusicology from the University of Washington.



Dr. Lowell Lybarger (LinkedIn)

During this time, he studied with the renowned tabla master Ustad Shaukat Hussain Khan.

After completing

his Master's degree, Dr. Lybarger returned to Pakistan numerous times between 1999–2007 to continue his research. In 2003, Dr. Lybarger received his PhD in Musicology from the University of Toronto.

The Lowell H. Lybarger Collection of Pakistani Music Materials represents the extensive fieldwork conducted by him in Pakistan, India, the United States, and Canada from 1994–2007. The bulk of the collection consists of field recordings of Pakistani music made on various analog and digital video formats such as hi-8mm, VHS, mini-DV, and others. Many of the recordings and fieldwork



Hand-bound book in Urdu

in this collection were used as the basis for Dr. Lybarger's 2003 PhD thesis, "The Tabla Solo Repertoire of Pakistani Panjab: An Ethnomusicological Perspective." The collection also contains a fair amount of commercially produced videos, audio recordings, theses, rare books, newspaper clippings, and other paper materials related to the fieldwork.

The content in the collection mostly focuses on classical Hindustani tabla music from the Panjab region in Pakistan, and spans the years 1965–2007. The collection also contains materials documenting other types

of classical and folk music traditions from Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, and nearby countries. One such example from the collection is a rare video field recording of Mohammad Afzal Khan and Mohammad Hafiz Khan, both now deceased. They represent the last few remaining Panjabi singers who perform in the Dhrupad style of Talwandi Gharana. The collection is currently being processed and a finding aid will be available soon, so that it can be made more accessible to researchers and scholars.

Fromm Players at Harvard Concerts: Talea Ensemble

Songs Found in Dream (March 3, 4) offered two evenings of concerts by new music composers George Lewis, James Dillon, Gerard Grisey, Brian Ferneyhough, Rand Steiger, Liza Lim, and Hans Tutschku. The Talea explored works invoking the different realities of dreaming life and waking life, which curator Hans Tutschku conceives of as potentially equally "real" in our experience.

"Hopes and dreams have forever been sources of inspiration for artists of all genres," said Tutschku. "When Alex Lipowski, the

artistic director of Talea Ensemble, and myself first discussed an overarching theme and possible compositions for this year's concerts, we had not anticipated how poignant the subject would be in our current social and political situation: dreams and hopes not as an escape from reality but as inspiring spaces to celebrate uniqueness, individuality and vision."



FALL 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BLODGETT CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES PARKER QUARTET



Photo: Jamie Jung

DANIEL CHONG, violin
YING XUE, violin
JESSICA BODNER, viola
KEE-HYUN KIM, cello
Inspiring performances, luminous sound, and exceptional musicianship are the hallmarks of the Grammy Award-winning Parker Quartet.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 AT 8:00 PM
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19 AT 8:00 PM

HARVARD GROUP FOR NEW MUSIC



Established in 1984, HGNM brings together the community of graduate composers at Harvard University. Concerts by some of the international community's best musicians showcase members' newest music throughout the year.

FALL CONCERT: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4 AT 8:00 PM

WOLFF DISTINGUISHED VISITING SCHOLAR MASAAKI SUZUKI

WEDNESDAY - FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15-17



Suzuki is an award-winning Japanese organist, harpsichordist and conductor, and the founder and musical director of the Bach Collegium Japan. He will work with students and ensembles during his residency, and on **Saturday, November 18, 7-9 pm**, Suzuki will conduct a master class and public open rehearsal with the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum, the University Choir and the Harvard Baroque Chamber Orchestra.

MUSICOLOGY IN THE 21ST CENTURY: GUIDO ADLER

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

Symposium in conjunction with the Adler Collection Exhibit at Isham and Houghton
Panel Discussion:
Guido Adler and the Birth of Musicology
Podium discussion:
Musicology in the 21st Century

Widely considered the father of modern Musicology, Guido Adler (1855-1941) was a scholar, writer, and critic who taught at the universities of Prague and Vienna.



BARWICK COLLOQUIA

Davison Room, Music Library Mondays at 4:15 pm



September 18
JULIO ESTRADA
Composer



September 25
BILL BROWN
University of Chicago



October 16
JENNIFER IVERSON
University of Chicago



October 30 GMF TALK
SARAH COLLINS
Durham University

For more information and a full schedule of events go to music.fas.harvard.edu

Undergraduate News

Yang Finalist at Van Cliburn

Congratulations to freshman Tony Yike Yang on being one of the 30 finalists at the Fifteenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, to be held this year in Ft. Worth, Texas. Yang is enrolled in his first year of the Harvard/NEC Dual Degree program.



Scolnick-Brower, Frucht, Wu Win Office for the Arts Prizes

ALEXANDER (SASHA) SCOLNIK-BROWER '17 was this year's recipient of the Louis Sudler Prize in the Arts. The prize recognizes outstanding artistic talent and achievement in the composition or performance of music, drama, dance, or the visual arts. The prize honors the sum of a student's artistic activities at Harvard. Sasha is a Harvard/NEC dual degree student and English concentrator. He served as conductor and music director for BachSoc, assistant conductor for the HRO, has conducted the Mozart Society Orchestra and performs with Brattle Street Chamber players.

EMMA FRUCHT '17 and SAM WU '17 received the Robert Levin Prize in Musical Performance.

Frucht has served as co-concertmaster and co-principal second violin of the HRO, and President and Treasurer of the Brattle Street Chamber Players. She has performed as a soloist with the Mozart Society Orchestra.

Wu (see story on page 7) is a composer who is the Music Director for the Mozart Society Orchestra, guest-conducted for the Bach Society Orchestra, and served as the assistant conductor of the HRO.

Steven Ekert, James Hotchiss Receive Parker Quartet 2017 Guest Artist Awards

The Parker Quartet Guest Artist Award is open to all Harvard student instrumentalists interested in collaborating and performing with the Parker Quartet as part of their Blodgett Chamber Music Series at Harvard University. Each year the focus is on a specific work written for a larger chamber music ensemble. Chosen recipients of the award are invited to work with the Parker Quartet in preparation for a final public performance. Congratulations to the 2017 winners: Steven Ekert, bassoon and James Hotchkiss, double bass.

A native of Massapequa, New York, nineteen-year-old bassoonist STEVEN EKERT is a first-year student in the Harvard/NEC dual degree program as a student of Richard Ranti. He is pursuing a concentration in History and Literature at Harvard, with a focus in American Studies. Before coming to Harvard, Ekert studied with Marc Goldberg at The Juilliard School Pre-College Division. Other teachers and mentors include William Katz and Harrison Miller. A substitute with the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra, Mr. Ekert has served as principal bassoon of the HRO, Harvard College Opera, New York Youth Symphony, Juilliard Pre-College Orchestra and Symphony, and Boston University Tanglewood

Institute's Young Artists Orchestra.

As bassoonist of the Nonamé Quintet—Ekert placed first in the 2016 M-Prize International Chamber Arts Competition in the Junior Winds Division. He has also given chamber music performances in Alice Tully Hall, Peter J. Sharp Theater, and both Paul and Morse Halls at The Juilliard School. As well as traveling to Argentina with the HRO, Ekert will be spending his summer at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California.

A native of Sudbury, Massachusetts, JAMES HOTCHKISS is a double bassist and junior at Harvard College, where he studies mathematics. He has performed with orchestras and chamber ensembles in concert halls across North America and Europe, including the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Berliner Philharmonie, and the KKL Luzern, as well as in Boston's Symphony Hall and Rockport's Shalin Liu Performance Center. Recently, James has studied with Don Palma, Paul Ellison, and Francois Rabbath, with whom he has appeared in concert, and he is currently a member of the Brattle Street Chamber Players.

Angela Tang, Enchi Chang, Sofia Tong and Sam Wu preparing for the Senior Composition Thesis Recital, which featured work by Ari Korotkin, Auburn Lee and Sam Wu.



Andris Nelsons and Mark Volpe greet audience members after a public discussion of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and symphonies in Paine Hall in April.



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SLab 2.0: Science Model for Sound Studies

The burgeoning cross-disciplinary field of Sound Studies has found a home in the department's Sound Studies Lab (SLab), a bank of computer stations and field recording equipment for editing, documenting, and manipulating sound located in the Loeb Music Library. SLab serves as one of Harvard's central site for sound-related teaching and learning, where course offerings and informal projects take place. Five years after its founding we are now ramping up operations to transition from SLab 1.0 to SLab 2.0—a proper laboratory in the science model, with students and faculty working on projects in a variety of sound-related fields based on an apprenticeship model, with regular lab meetings and peer-to-peer feedback. On April 4, Professor Alex Rehding, Technical Manager Chris Danforth, and Peter McMurray (PhD November '14) hosted an informational launch of Slab 2.0.

“We have ambitious plans,” said Rehding. “We hope to be an incubator for new ways of thinking and new methodologies about sound—as an object and as a medium of information. SLab will empower faculty and students to draw on their sonic environments in their daily activities and their scholarly work. Because the department now has a full-time Technical Manager, this model is now sustainable.

Often at the university, projects dealing with similar goals and research take place independently of each other. SLab 2.0 aims to function as an interface: “We are hoping for broad conversation around sound that includes as much of the university as possible,” Rehding said. So far, collaborators have expressed interest from de-



Alex Rehding at the SLab 2.0 launch. The lab will be in full operation by fall 2017.

partments such as English, History of Science, and East Asian Language and Culture, from the Graduate School of Design and the Engineering School, and from centers and labs such as the Sensory Ethnography Lab, the Bok Center, the Digital Humanities group, and the Hip Hop Archive.

One initiative of the new Slab, Audio Features and Podcasts—Sound as Conveyor of Knowledge (AFP), was recently awarded the Barajas Dean's Innovation Fund for Digital Arts. This effort will bring podcast producers and audio engineers to campus to give master classes and workshops, supplemented with Danforth's introductory sessions for students, faculty, and staff interested in learning the necessary skills for creating narrative sound works.

“In the context of the digital humanities, the question of sustainability is inextricably connected with storage and long-term preservation,” Rehding said. “We are also working on a sound-rich website that could also host the podcasts and audio features that are the products of our workshops and projects.”